



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

## Meeting Minutes

### Town Council Committee of the Whole

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk (860)441-6640  
Town Manager  
(860)441-6630

**Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Heather Sherman Bond, Kathryn M. Brown-Tracy, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streeter**

**Tuesday, November 13, 2007**

**6:00 PM**

**Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1**

#### **SPECIAL MEETING**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

*Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.*

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Brown-Tracy, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Streeter  
Members Absent: Councilor Bond

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnyan.*

#### **3. Calendar and Communications**

*Councilor Streeter clarified with staff his understanding that the building at Burnett's Corners was to be secured by Mr. Mitchell. Town Manager Oefinger noted that Building Official Kevin Quinn met with Mr. Mitchell and reiterated by e-mail to him the requirements to secure the building. Councilor Streeter noted that the building appears to be in the exact same condition and he is concerned. The Town Manager stated he will investigate to assure that the building is inaccessible.*

*Councilor O'Beirne asked for a referral on budget guidance and the Mayor made the referral to the Committee of the Whole.*

*Councilor Kolnaski stated that she would like to attend the December 6th Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.*

*Mayor Watson made a referral to the Committee of the Whole for appointment of the Town Attorney.*

*Mayor Watson stated that he has been working on committee assignments, and he is suggesting to the Rules and Procedures Committee that Recreation be separated from the Environment Committee and be added to the Public Works Committee.*

*Town Manager Oefinger reminded Councilors of the December 1st Holiday Lights Parade and asked if anyone would like to participate. Positive responses were received from Councilors Sheets, Brown-Tracy, Monteiro, and Watson.*

*Town Manager Oefinger reported that the Town has received additional documentation from JCJ regarding the settlement agreement. A special meeting of the Committee of the Whole was scheduled for November 20th at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Watson suggested that the two new Councilors contact the Town Manager for background on this issue.*

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

**2007-0262**

**Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)**

**A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., to adopt the minutes**

of the September 18, 2007 Committee of the Whole meeting.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Votes:** In Favor: 5 - Mayor Watson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Streeter

Abstain: 3 - Councilor Brown-Tracy, Councilor Monteiro and Councilor Sheets

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., to adopt the minutes of the October 9, 2007 Committee of the Whole meeting.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Votes:** In Favor: 6 - Mayor Watson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Streeter

Abstain: 2 - Councilor Brown-Tracy and Councilor Monteiro

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

### 2007-0246 2008 Rates for Shennecossett Golf Course

Discussed

*Director of Parks and Recreation, John Silsby, noted that the golf course rates are reviewed annually and are based on the calendar year. The goal is to get them approved early for holiday gift giving. First the rates are reviewed and approved by the Golf Advisory Board, then the Parks and Recreation Commission, and then the Town Council must approve them. The proposal is to increase rates by 4% or close to that to achieve a whole dollar amount. Revenue is dependent on the amount of play in any given year. Shennecossett Golf Course offers competitive rates, and play and revenue have been increasing for the last few years. Different passes are available and restricted passes have recently been modified to include weekend play after 4:00 p.m.*

*Mr. Silsby would like to have a Town Council liaison to the Golf Advisory Board appointed. In response to a question from Councilor O'Beirne, Mr. Silsby explained that the cart fees are not being raised as much because of the market. He added that there will be another CIP project for golf paths submitted in the coming year.*

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

### 2007-0072 Citizen Committee on Property Tax Relief - Update

Discussed

*Discussion of this item was tabled to the next regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. The Council indicated they would like Citizen Committee members to attend.*

### 2003-0177 Renovations & Additions to Groton School Facilities - Phase I

Discussed

*Town Manager Oefinger provided a brief update on the school projects. All schools are scheduled to open on January 7, 2008. Furniture is arriving now, and it is expected that technology components will be installed in December. Contractors are well ahead of schedule on window installation at Catherine Kolnaski School. Discussion followed on a possible walk through at the end of the month.*

### 2007-0140 Town Property at Buddington/Old Buddington Roads

Discussed

*Town Manager Oefinger has not received the Town Attorney's opinion on this item yet. The Town Attorney is looking into adopting a procedure for selling a piece of property that has been transferred to the Town through tax foreclosure which would also include Town Council review as soon as property is foreclosed. Mayor Watson asked that this item be placed on the November 20th special meeting agenda.*

*Town Manager Oefinger provided a brief background on this issue for new Councilors.*

**2007-0166 Request for Financial Incentive - Groton Hospitality, LLC**

**Discussed**

*Town Manager Oefinger noted this item is on the agenda to schedule a public hearing. Councilor O'Beirne suggested that if the Town Council denies the request, there is no need for a public hearing. He stated that he does not feel this request meets the criteria of the policy established by the Town Council and that the incentive should only be offered to new businesses, not those already built. Councilor O'Beirne feels this is not an incentive, but more of a reward.*

*Councilor Schmidt noted specifics of the proposal discussed in the Economic Development Committee. Councilor Monteiro stated that the policy also refers to "expansion" which does not limit the policy to new businesses. Councilor Streeter agreed that the Council does not have to have a public hearing. Councilor Kolnaski supported a public hearing to gather information. Councilor Sheets expressed concern, but would like to hear from the public.*

*Councilor Bond arrived at 6:58 p.m. She explained that the developer originally requested a very aggressive abatement, and staff was able to negotiate a different abatement schedule. The developer was ill during the time that he would normally have requested the abatement which is why the request came so late in the construction schedule. Councilor Bond feels a public hearing will allow the public to comment on the Council's policy of granting incentives.*

**Roll Call:** Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bond, Councilor Brown-Tracy, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Streeter

**A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, to schedule a public hearing on December 4, 2007.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Votes:** In Favor: 7 - Mayor Watson, Councilor Bond, Councilor Brown-Tracy, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Sheets  
Opposed: 2 - Councilor O'Beirne, Jr. and Councilor Streeter

**2007-0245 Groton Education Foundation Grant**

**A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2007-0254 Adoption of 2008 Group I Regular Meeting Schedule**

**Discussed**

*Councilor Sheets asked that cancellation of the Group meetings be minimized and that Committee chairmen be consulted. Mayor Watson asked that Committee chairs notify the Town Manager if there are referral items that they would like to have placed on an agenda for discussion.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2007-0255 Adoption of 2008 Group II Regular Meeting Schedule**

**A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2007-0256 Adoption of 2008 Committee of the Whole Regular Meeting Schedule**

**A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2007-0257 Adoption of 2008 Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule**

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

**2007-0258 Regional Performance Incentive Program Grant**

Discussed

*Town Manager Oefinger explained the grant for funds to be used by Regional Councils of Government to support regional activities. The COG has decided to request \$300,000 in grant funds for a regional GIS system. The Town of Groton would participate by providing some in-house expertise. Member communities of the COG must authorize the submittal.*

*Councilor Sheets noted the intent of the grant is to encourage regionalization and reduce costs and she questioned how that would happen. She expressed concern that Groton will be responsible for creating a regional GIS. Town Manager Oefinger emphasized that this is not a Groton project and it will be the COG's responsibility to maintain and update the system.*

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

**2007-0259 Year Round Expanded DUI Enforcement Grant**

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

**2007-0260 Appointment to Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Advisory Board**

Recommended for a Resolution

A motion was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, to appoint Harry Watson and Mary Lou Smith to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Advisory Board.

The motion carried unanimously

**2007-0261 Town Clerk Compensation**

Discussed

*Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox asked what type of evaluation the Town Council would like to do this year. Mayor Watson explained that in the past, the Town Clerk has submitted a summary of her activities and the Council has used a form to evaluate her. The consensus of the Council was to use the same system.*

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.